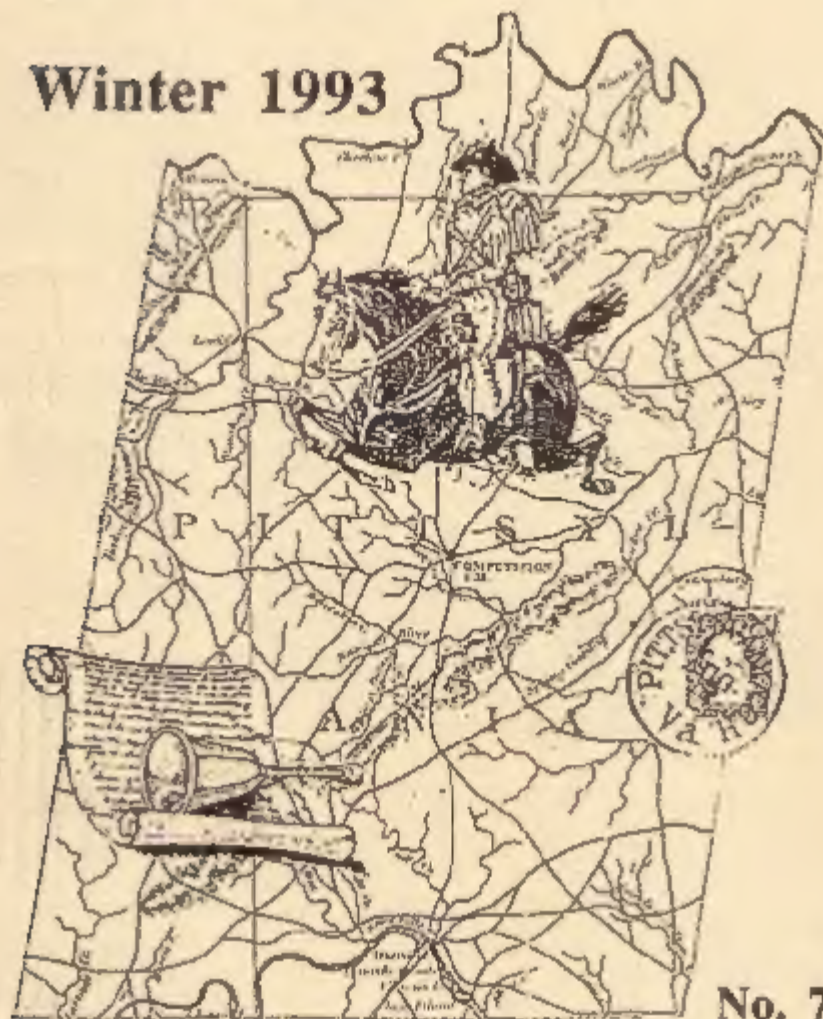


# The Pittsylvania Packet

Winter 1993



No. 7

Pittsylvania Historical Society  
Chatham, Virginia

## COMMENTS BY THE PHS PRESIDENT

We are now into a new year with a new president of this great nation who has made promises for a new era with many changes.

Whether he'll make good on his promises to bring great changes, we'll have to wait and see. But at least he has plans - and that is the first step towards getting something done.

We of the Pittsylvania Historical Society should make some plans. That is, at least do some goal setting.

Perhaps we should have a wish-list of some "things this society can look forward to getting done in the future."

Here are several suggestions that may be considered goals for us to put on the wish-list.

1 - A museum where county people can place priceless heirlooms, antiques and articles of value for safekeeping and public viewing. Maybe someone would be interested in being the benefactor of such a project with the museum being a memorial to the memory of the benefactor.

2 - I'd like to see the history of Pittsylvania County updated. It is hoped that an historian-author would revise and bring the county history book up to date by adding the 64 years since it was published in 1929.

3 - I'd like to see a toilet facility added to the 1813 Clerk's Office building - that will blend in with the historical landmark.

As president, I am appointing a planning committee with the hope that the committee will plant the seed that will serve as a goal - and might develop into something in the PHS's future. At least we can dream.

Named to the committee are Nancy Corbin, Virginia Chapin, Josephine Evans, Dorothy Harris, Frances Hurt, Herman Melton, Henry Mitchell and Garland Turner.

Whether you live in Virginia or some other state, we will welcome your suggestions for goals for the PHS to strive for. Write PHS, Box 1206, Chatham, VA 24531.

### FEB. 15TH MEETING WILL BE FUN PROGRAM

The February meeting of the PHS will be Monday night, February 15 at 7:30 p.m. in the old 1813 Clerk's Office - and it promises to be fun, lively and most entertaining.

We'll have Austin E. Jones, outstanding musician and leader of the "Tightsqueeze Philharmonic Orchestra" on the program.

Mr. Jones will bring his guitar, will sing and tell jokes - and will lead the audience in a "sing-along" of old well-known songs. (Words will be printed on sheets of paper and distributed to everyone so they can join in the musical sing-along.)

Austin Jones and his band have played in many places from up North to down South...and we are fortunate to get him for our Feb. 15th program...it is guaranteed to be fun, fun, fun!

Don't forget it will be Monday night, Feb. 15 at 7:30 p.m. in the old 1813 Clerk's Office (behind the Chatham Town Hall). Bring a friend.

# An Ante Bellum Tragedy on the Old R & D Railroad

By Herman Melton

The boiler burst with a roar that shook the earth and interrupted the tranquility of the Virginia countryside on that September day in 1859. It was not the first disaster on the old Richmond & Danville Railroad which came into being a decade earlier. It was, however, the first time a boiler exploded on one of its steam locomotives.

Of interest to most Pittsylvanians in the event is that it occurred on the locomotive "Pittsylvania," named for the home county of the railroad's founder, and first president - Whitmell Tunstall of Belle Grove.

After the steam, dust and debris settled, the first to the scene found the lifeless, battered and scalded body of L.D. Thomas, the engineer on the "Pittsylvania." Fortunately, the "Pittsylvania's" fireman was injured only slightly.

By the time of the tragedy, the Richmond and Danville Railroad had a total of 19 steam locomotives (1858 Annual Report of the Board of Public Works). Six were pulling passenger trains, and 13 were pulling freight only. Luckily, the "Pittsylvania" (Old No. 10) was a freight train, thus probably lessening the number of fatalities in the disaster.

The "Pittsylvania" was by no means the largest engine on the R & D, but its huge 40" diameter driving wheels were powered by an equally impressive 14" steam cylinder with a 20" stroke. Moreover, Old No. 10 with her water tender, weighed a whopping 32 tons. She came from good stock, having been built by the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, the Confederacy's largest armament works.

The "Pittsylvania" first chugged out of the Tredegar shop in 1853. Certainly the R & D prexy, Tunstall, saw to it that her brass was shining and her shell glistening. It is, however, hard to accept the fact that Tunstall waited until the 10th locomotive came on the R & D right-of-way to name one after his home county.

The line's locomotives were christened (in order of their service date) as follows: "Roanoke," "Fury," "Tempest," "Potomac," "Elvira," "Appomattox," "Atlanta," "Charlotte," "Carolina," "Pittsylvania," "Richmond," "Chesterfield," "Virginia," "Henry," "Amelia," "Banister,"



OLD RICHMOND AND DANVILLE  
RR STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

The locomotive pictured here was similar in design and size to the "Pittsylvania" which was destroyed by a steam boiler explosion in 1859.

Powhatan" and "Danville."

Then came a series of five larger locomotives that were named "Whitmell Tunstall," "Viccenti Witcher," "Lewis Harvie," "John McFarland" and "Charles Campbell" - all officers of the company. Two others - the "Pocahontas" and the "Atlas" - were built during the Civil War.

The records of the most famous of the R & D locomotives, the "Seddon," were not available to the writer.

According to a latter day publication of the Danville Register, it was this locomotive that pulled the train carrying Jefferson Davis to Danville when Richmond fell. It was named in honor of James E. Seddon who was CSA Secretary of War.

With this background in place, it is appropriate to return to the question of the cause of the boiler explosion on the "Pittsylvania." Official records do not reveal the answer.

The best guess is one obvious to anyone who has fired a steam boiler. During the early years of steam, the most common cause of explosion occurred when a careless fireman would allow the water to drop below visibility in the sight or "gauge" glass. Upon discovering the boiler water's level low, some inexperienced and unsuspecting firemen were known to quickly open the makeup water valve in order to raise the level. The cold water striking the superheated dry surface of the boiler drum caused a violent shock which often shattered the boiler shell as if it were of glass.

Another guess is corrosion (rust) which ate away at the metal. Also, in those primitive days, it was common practice for engineers (with less caution than impatience) to clamp down the safety or relief valve in order to garner a few more pounds of steam pressure. If excessive enough - disaster resulted.

Perhaps the maintenance was inadequate and fatigue developed. In any case, the busy "Pittsylvania" pulled only freight i.e. heavy loads, and in the year prior to her accident, she chugged 14,003 miles. This left little time for maintenance. The answers to the above may never be known.

Thankfully though, the saga of the "Pittsylvania" closes on a happier note. The 1864 annual report of the R & D listed the "Pittsylvania" as back in service, but this time as locomotive No. 9 carrying Confederate Army freight.

Presumably, the "Pittsylvania" continued her service on the R & D through the dark days of the Reconstruction, after which, the R & D became a part of the Southern RR system.

The Ringgold depot in Pittsylvania County, where old No. 10 chugged past many times, remains standing today. If one is an incurable romantic and tries hard enough, he or she can stand on the platform at this depot (the oldest in the county) and hear the "rumble and the roar" of the "Pittsylvania" as she chugs east towards Richmond with carloads of tobacco.

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*Note: The above is excerpted from the ms. of Melton's book titled: Picks, Tracks & Rails: Industry in Pittsylvania County, 1750-1950, which will be released in 1993.*

### RENEWING MEMBERSHIPS STARTS IN MAY

I am happy to report that 24 new members have joined the PHS since November. They are from Missouri, Kansas, Ohio, Maryland, North Carolina, Illinois, Indiana, Delaware, Georgia, Texas and Japan. We are delighted to welcome each of you to our outstanding organization.

As of now, our society numbers 512 members. There were only 28 members that we missed hearing from for this current membership year.

If we haven't heard from you about your dues, it isn't too late to renew.

Our membership year for renewing memberships starts in May. Dues remain the same: \$10 for single membership and \$15 for double. We believe that is a bargain.

Let us hear from you. Jeannette Brown, membership secretary, Route 1, Box 8K6, Chatham, VA 24531.

### MEMBERS WRITE LETTERS

I want to tell you how pleased I am with results of the query I put in **The Packet** regarding the parents of Joshua Betterton. A lady who is a member of your society, Barbara Bonham, called me from California and gave me the name of a person to call in Roxboro, NC who was working on the Betterton family. Thanks for all of your assistance, Mrs. Berydean Groom Hubbard, 5745 Brouse Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46220.

Many thanks for the nice response to my inquiry about David Ross Article. I read every article in **The Packet**. No quarterly is more eagerly awaited. Nancy Dee Lester Elayer, Route 3, Box 3225, Piedmont, MO 63957.

Thank you for running my query in **The PHS Packet**. The response has been very interesting, but I still do not know who Jennie is? Lois Johnson, 7887 S. Forest St., Littleton, CO 80122.

I wish to join the Pittsylvania Historical Society so that I may continue the search of my husband's ancestors. Enclosed is check. Sallie J. Moore, Route 9, Box 232, Hickory, NC 28601.

### TO SEARCH BAPTIST RECORDS

For Baptist Church records, write to American Baptist Historical Society, 1100 S. Goodman St., Rochester, NY 14620. For Southern Baptist Church records, write to Historical Commission, SBC, 127 9th Avenue, Nashville, TN 37234 (From Stalking Kin.)

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### PUT GENEALOGY IN LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

To put your genealogy in the U.S. Library of Congress, all you have to do is mail your typed completed genealogy to The Library of Congress, Exchange and Gifts Division, 10 First St., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20540. (From Johnson Quarterly)



# Reminders of Early Chatham

## A Self-Guided Tour Around Chatham, VA

Compiled By Henry H. Mitchell

### (Keyed to Map)

*The "public face" of Chatham is that of a Victorian and early-20th-century town. However, Chatham was actually founded in 1777, and closer examination reveals a few visual reminders of its first and second generations. This article is intended to assist in identifying these early local landmarks.*

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### 1. Mansfield - ca. 1770

When Pittsylvania County was trimmed to its present boundaries in 1777 and its court moved from Callands to Chatham, the General Assembly ordered that court be temporarily held at Richard Farthing's home, assumed to be the log-bodied rear room of this residence.



It sat near Hickey's Road (modern day Hurt Street/Chalk Level Road), the first major east-west thoroughfare through this frontier district. Mansfield is currently a private faculty residence on the campus of Chatham Hall.

### 2. Clerk's Office - 1813

#### 16 Court Place (Rear)

The first courthouse in Chatham was built near springs a few hundred yards west of present downtown. The damp, boggy location proved unacceptable; therefore, a second court location was chosen where Chatham Baptist Church now stands.



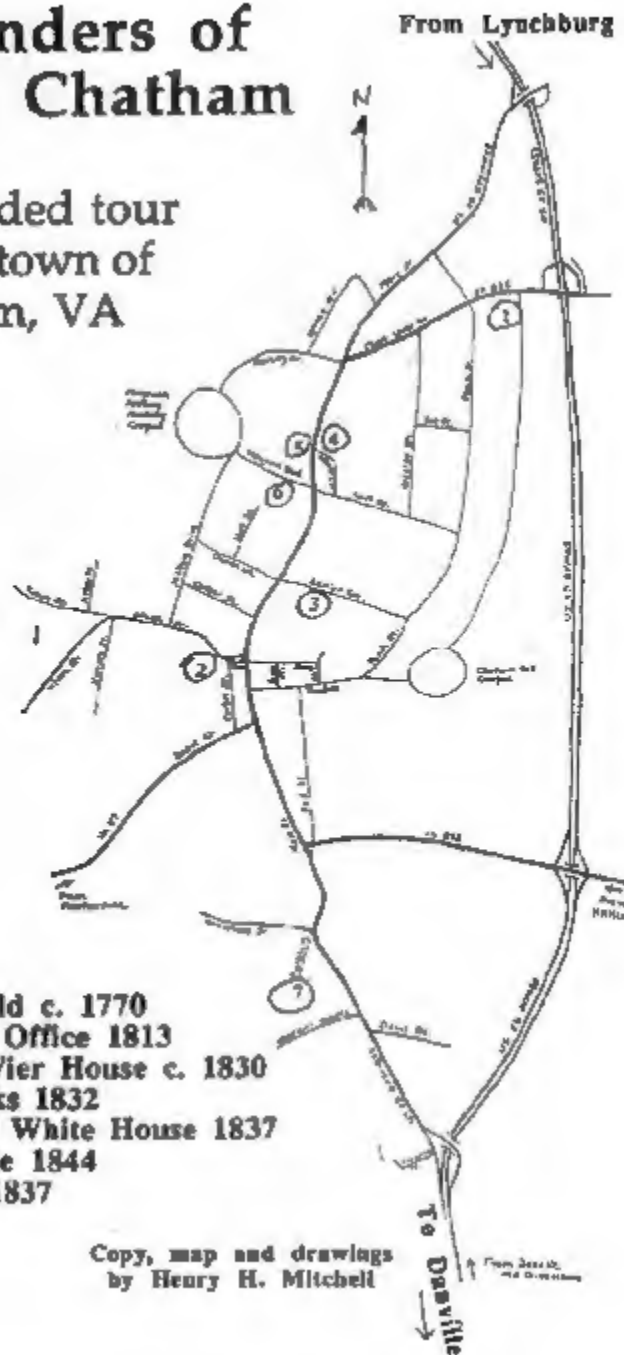
The decision was so hotly contested that the legislature changed the name of Pittsylvania Court House to "Competition" in 1807. (Not until 1874 did the town become "Chatham," a name originally given in 1769 to the court village at Callands.)

In 1812-13, a clerk's office was built near the "new" courthouse. Yet another (the present) courthouse was built a few hundred feet to the east in 1853, leaving the clerk's office behind, in the "backyard" (Town Park) of the old Tredway-Whithead house (Town Hall.)

During the 1980's, the Pittsylvania Historical Society restored the old Clerk's Office for use as a meeting room and museum. The building is on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

# Reminders of Early Chatham

Self-guided tour  
around town of  
Chatham, VA



## Map Key

- 1 - Mansfield c. 1770
- 2 - Clerk's Office 1813
- 3 - Hugh Wier House c. 1830
- 4 - The Oaks 1832
- 5 - Richard White House 1837
- 6 - Ingleside 1844
- 7 - Morea 1837

Copy, map and drawings  
by Henry H. Mitchell

### 3. Hugh Wier House

c. 1830

25 Lanier Avenue

Here sits a crown jewel from Chatham's early days, a beautiful brick Federal-style residence built by merchant Hugh Wier.

It has been stunningly restored by Reginald and Anna Whitehead Kenney beginning during the 1930's and continuing today under the ownership of Dr. and Mrs. Hugh Willis, Jr.

Originally the house's lawn extended from Main Street in front to Tanyard Branch at the bottom of the hill behind the house.



### 4. The Oaks - 1832

215 Gilmer Drive

The old stage road to Lynchburg departed Chatham's north end through a magnificent grove of oaks. Here, where some of the oaks remain today, Dr. Robert Coles chose to place his massive Federal house.



He obtained court permission to alter the stage road (now Main Street) slightly to the west.

The house boasts wide-paneled pine wainscoting and "12-over-12" windows in the original downstairs rooms. The original Federal portico was replaced during the mid-1900's with a large porch. The Oaks is now the private residence of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hurt.

### 5. Richard White House

1837

216 North Main Street

Across the stage road from Dr. Coles' home, his friend Dr. Richard White built a smaller house, a portion of the present structure.



The building was expanded in later years to its current appearance with Gothic roofline and broad latticed porch.

After Dr. White's death, the home was purchased by Stanhope S. Hurt, Clerk of the Court for 62 years (a record term among all elective officeholders in the history of the U.S.).

The house is a private residence, again owned by the Hurt family after a long period as the Hundley home.



## 6. Ingleside - 1844

### 24 Hargrave Boulevard

Completing the threesome of the town's doctors during the early 1840's, all living within a stone's throw, was Dr. Chesley Martin, Dr. White's brother-in-law.



He constructed the central portion of this building in the Federal style.

Dr. Martin's son, Lt. Col. Rawley White Martin, commanded the local 53rd Va. Regiment in Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. Martin, along with color-bearer Lt. Hutchings Carter of Chatham, and Gen. Lewis Armistead, were the point of the Confederates' farthest advance before Martin was wounded and captured, Carter captured, and Armistead killed.

From 1909 to 1910, Chatham Training School (now Hargrave Military Academy) utilized this as their main building.

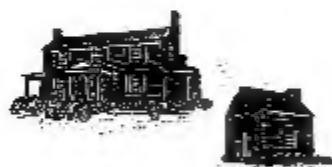
Through the years, the house has been expanded and porches added. It is now the residence of Mrs. James Tucker.

## 7. Morea - 1837

### 42 Franklin Place

Architect and merchant James L. Poindexter built this magnificent Federal home on 20 acres of land at the south end of Chatham.

In 1873 Morea was purchased by Lt. Col. Rawley W. Martin (see above) who had followed his father's footsteps into the practice of medicine.



Dr. Martin's office (the original 18th century house on the property and one of Chatham's very oldest structures), sits in the yard beside Morea, and a smokehouse is to the rear.

The house grew to include vast verandas in the early 1900's, but its present owners, Comdr. (USN, Ret.) and Mrs. Richard W. Arey, have restored it to a Federal form similar to the original.

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## PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY IN 1850

From the 1850 Mortality Census, year ending June 1, 1850, about Pittsylvania County with remarks by William H. Waller, Assistant Marshall, enumerator. Page 120 as follows: -

"Water is good and plentiful nearly altogether free stone with a few springs of sulphur. Timber of Pine, Oak, Poplar, Walnut, Hickory and soil generally fertile. Some lime no marl or ores. Streams sufficient for the various kinds of machinery are numerous. Diseases called Pneumonia and Typhoid fever have been raging and a great number have died. The Inhabitants Industrious, Intelligent, kind and Hospitable in Pittsylvania County."

-Contributed by John E. Burrows III, Roanoke, VA

# Pittsylvania Picnics and Suppers

By Patricia B. Mitchell

Southern people have long enjoyed community or neighborhood gatherings. Barn-raising, corn shuckings, hog-killings, church dinners on the grounds, weddings, reunions, funerals -- all provide opportunities for fellowship and food.

House-raising and the like are less common today, but picnics and some of the other old-timey eating events still occur.

"Lemonade stirred with a spade" and "a pile of apple pies stacked a foot or so high" comprised part of the menus at post-Civil-War picnics.

Today fried chicken and ham, coleslaw, potato salad, deviled eggs, pickles, cakes, etc. appear at many Southern communal meals.

These days the chicken might be from "the Colonel" and the ham from a deli, but nevertheless, people do get together to share a good time.

Church groups and fire departments in this locality frequently prepare huge pots of Brunswick Stew. The cooks work outdoors, using an open fire.

They start early in the morning, and hours later, the rich, savory steam of the stew pot begins to entice customers who purchase the soup by the bowl, or in quart containers to take home.

Gibson Jefferson McConaughy recorded the following poem concerning Brunswick Stew in her 1977 cookbook, *Two Centuries of Virginia Cooking*. The rhyme was penned by John Banister Tabb (1845-1909).

## *The Tryst*

*Potato was deep in the dark under ground  
Tomato, above in the light;  
The little Tomato was ruddy and round,  
The little Potato was white.  
And redder and redder she rounded above,  
And paler and paler he grew,  
And neither suspected a mutual love,  
Till they met in a Brunswick stew.*

Large - and small - scale barbecues are also common -- politicians taking advantage of this means, as well as fish fries, to garner votes. Individual families often host a backyard cook-out, grilling steaks, burgers, hot dogs, whatever they please, on a charcoal grill.

Church homecomings are an annual occurrence at some of the area country churches. The ladies all bring different foods to put on long tables, creating a "pot luck" meal.

Clan gatherings, at which an extended family meets, greets and eats, are perennially popular. Sometimes individuals bring certain specialty dishes for which they have been known for decades. Fresh coconut cake, damson pie, fried pies, watermelon rind pickles, fudge -- such delicacies can make a cook's reputation.

The following account, from the September 8, 1926 *Danville Register* (clipping provided by Mrs. Ollie Yeatts Jennings of Danville), describes a Pittsylvania County family gathering which honored Susan

**Alice Edwards Yeatts (Mrs. Coleman Bennett Yeatts):**  
**Family Reunion Held at Dry Fork**  
*Sixty-eighth Birthday Mrs. S.A. Yeatts a Happy Occasion*

**DRY FORK --** At the home of Mrs. S. A. Yeatts was held a family reunion on Sunday, Sept. 6. The happy family gathering was made up of Mrs. S.A. Yeatts now in her fifth year with her children and grandchildren all being present except one grandson and the only great granddaughter Mr. R.B. Yeatts and little daughter, Bernice May of Durham, N.C., making a total present of nine children and 46 grandchildren.

Among those were Richard and Dave Yeatts and families of Whitwell, Robert Jones and family, Danville, Chas. Jones and children Messrs. Dewey, John, Bernice, Stanley and Sam Yeatts and families all of Dry Fork, Mr. W.A. Yeatts and family of Clumax and Mr. and Mrs. G.N. Cundiff, Whittier.

A large table had been prepared on the lawn in the cool of the nice old shade trees. Each family carried a basket and lunch was served about 12.30, consisting of mutton, beef, pork, ham, chicken and all kinds of sandwiches, cakes, pies, pickles and hot coffee which was enjoyed by old and young.

In the afternoon the older members were charmingly entertained with songs and games by the youngsters and social greetings from old friends who came in to talk of their young days together.

All during the afternoon, chocolate, vanilla and strawberry ice cream and lemonade were served all.

About mid-afternoon, Mr. Deering came out from Chatham and made some pictures of the family group ....

At 6 o'clock supper was served, immediately after which the group parted for their several homes all declaring a pleasant day.

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## **IVALEE DALTON SOLVES RELATIONS**

Ivalee Dalton of Route 3, Gretna, VA. had the answer to my "Odd Relations By Marriage" riddle in November's Packet which was -

"An elderly man in N.C. married, and by taking his wife became a brother in law to his son-in-law, and an uncle to two grandchildren. On the other hand, the bride became a grandmother to a nephew and a niece and a step-mother to her sister-in-law and a sister-in-law to her brother."

Ivalee Dalton wrote "Fact, an elderly man has a daughter, son in law and two grandchildren. He remarries, taking the sister of his son-in-law as his bride. Therefore, the son-in-law becomes his brother-in-law, grandchildren become nephew/niece since grandfather married their aunt.

On the other hand, the bride will become stepmother of his daughter who is also her sister in-law. She will be grandmother to her nephew/niece, as wife of their grandfather. She will be step-mother-in-law to her brother as he is husband of her step-daughter.

But I haven't figured out how she is a sister-in-law of her brother

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The reason a dog has so many friends is because he wags his tail instead of his tongue.

## February 1993 Queries

(Free to members to aid others with similar requests.)

**HALE, HAIL, HAILE**, Revolutionary War soldier from Pittsylvania to Blount or Knox County TN by 1809. Given name may have been Hugh, John or Robert. Brother named Alexander. Wife may have been Susannah. Son William born 1809 in TN, married daughter of Grimsfield TAYLOR, went to Green County, MO. Please write: Dorothy J. NIX, 501 N. Smith St. Vinita, OK 74301

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Searching information on Lewis BREWER married Agatha HOLLAND in Elk Creek, Grayson Co. VA about 1787. Children were Elizabeth, Juda, Nancy, Richard, Aaron, Lewis, Samuel, William, John, Linear, Abel, Martin, Sally, Rufus and James. My great great grandfather was Rufus BREWER, Died 1865 in Rock Island Co., IL. Willing to share information. Write to June WELSCH, 1170 Ripley Ct. Muscatine, IOWA 52761. Note: I have written a book on Lewis Brewer, sells at \$28 on order

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I wish to receive any data about the WARF family and will accept any inquiries. A WARF family book is in the works, includes German, English and American WARFS with lives to present. Also section on misplaced WARFS and possible connections. Already over 265 pages. Write to Don and Rene WARF, 1434 Tonopah Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45255.

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Seek information on Nathan Elijah REED, died and was buried in Chatham July 1935. He was 80-years-old, originally from Michigan. Write to Phil HOVEY, 12005 Berrybrook Terrace, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

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**MAYS, WALKER**. Need parents of William G. MAYS, m. in Pittsylvania Co. VA Dec. 12, 1842 to Edda WALKER, daughter of Lerauel John WALKER. William died in Pittsylvania March 28, 1865. Write to Sallie J. MOORE, Route 9, Box 232, Hickory, NC 28601

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I wish to hear from anyone possessing information on William Thomas EANES Jr.'s father. Write to Paul E. EANES, La Grange, Georgia.

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**SAUNDERS, PARSONS**. Need parents of Nathan R. SAUNDERS, married Rebecca PARSONS, Jan. 15, 1827 in Pittsylvania County, VA. Rebecca was daughter of John PARSONS. Nathan and Rebecca lived in Patrick County, VA in 1850. Write Sallie J. MOORE, Route 9, Box 232, Hickory, NC 28601

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Who were parents of Mary (Polly) MITCHELL? believed to be of Pittsylvania Co. VA. married Jubal DIXON of Bedford County. December 13, 1808 and marriage recorded in Bedford Co. VA. Jubal's mother was Frances TOWLER, daughter of William TOWLER, and married Alexander OAKES. William and Joseph TOWLER operated a ferry where Towler Bridge spans Staunton River today. Other connections are RORER, GOAD, LEFTWICH, SHOCKLEY, ARTHUR, THOMPSON, CALLAWAY, HOWELL, NEWMAN, HACKWORTH, and etc. Will gladly share data. Write to Virginia H. YANCY, 3400 Foothill Parkway, Austin, TX 78731

## (QUERIES -- CONTINUED)

Does anyone know the name of first wife of William SAUNDERS, who died in Pittsylvania County, VA about 1815-1825? His second wife was Ann DOVE, and they had 11 children, whom may still have descendants living in Pittsylvania County. Contact Pa M. DULIN, Route 2, Box 149, N. Vinson, IOWA 52349.

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Seeking information on families of WEBB, MARTIN and BURNS who lived in Pittsylvania County, VA in 1770's. Merry WEBB born in Scotland, d. 1779, m. Elizabeth MARTIN and had children - Mary, Elizabeth, Martin and Merry Jr. Was Elizabeth's father Capt. Joseph MARTIN? Charles BURNS was born about 1730 in Scotland, d. 1789 in Pittsylvania County, m. Mary WEBB, children - Alexander, Andrew, John, Samuel and William. Five of sons were in Revolutionary War. I would like to exchange information on these three families. Write Ernestine ROGERS, 2011 West Missouri, Midland, TX 79701.

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I would like to correspond with anyone who is researching the family name of PADGETT. Any help appreciated. Write Mike PADGETT, 7100 E. 10th St., Indianapolis, IN 46219.

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Seek information on Ephraim RIDDLE who m. Judith GRAVELY 12-22-1822. Lived in Pittsylvania County, VA. Had children - Frances, Elizabeth, Labez, Sallie Jane and William Perkins RIDDLE. Three children moved to Warren Co., MO along with father in 1839. Write to Fred VAHLE, Route 2, Box 155B, Warrenton, MO 63383.

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Seek information on lines of ELLIOTT, CRIDER (CRYDER, KRITER) and MILLS, especially prior to 1860; and information on Richard ELLIOTT, Baptist minister whose parents were John and Susanna ELLIOTT. Also John ELLIOTT (b. 1748, d. March 3, 1840) and his brother William. Ancestors of Samuel J. ELLIOTT, b. 1835, m. Nancy HUTSON; also Samuel ELLIOTT married Polly (or Molley) BOAZ, and also Jonathan ELLIOTT who lived around 1800. Write to John E. BURROWS III, 815 Hartsock Blvd., Roanoke, VA 24014.

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Need information on Samuel DUNCAN, who was born in Pittsylvania County, VA 1760. Who were his parents? His wife was Mary SAMPSON (When were they married? Who were her parents? Where and when did she die?) Samuel died in Lincoln County, KY in 1845. Write to Annella Duncan HUNT, 460 Acres #31, Talent, OR 97540.

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### NAMES SPELLED DIFFERENT WAYS

In the 1790 federal census the name REYNOLDS was spelled 34 different ways ranging from Ranals through Renholds, Reynulis, etc. Even Brown was spelled seven ways - Brown, Broons, Bruun, Bruwae, Bruune, Brownes. (From The Chisholm Trail.)

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Someday, somewhere, someone will want to read what you could write down now!!!

# Pension papers tell the story of hardships of Revolutionary War

Karen R. Christensen sent "The Packet" a copy of the transcription of the pension papers prepared by Joseph Epps for Thomas F. Ramsey Jr. (of Pittsylvania County, VA) who fought in the Revolutionary War with the Pittsylvania County Militia.

The pension papers describes the trials and the tribulations that Thomas Ramsey and the other county soldiers suffered during the Revolutionary War. It recounted the brutality and hardships endured, which is not what is told in the history books.

It was revealed that the Virginia Militia was kept in a constant state of alarm in 1778 and 1779 by the threat of invasion particularly in the Tidewater area.

The Ramsey pension papers give an account of the expeditions of the British General Mathews who established his forces at Portsmouth, VA and sent his soldiers by land and water to ransack towns, murder and plunder the defenseless inhabitants, and destroy with sword and fire.

Ramsey told he often wept at witnessing the suffering and destitution inflicted on women and children whose homes were burned, and clothes even stripped off their bodies by the British.

Even their livestock was killed in front of their eyes, he related.

When the Pittsylvanians were urged to volunteer for the militia to resist the invaders, Ramsey told he volunteered his service and met at a place of rendezvous called "Widow McDaniel" in the county where the militia was formed under the command of Captain Roberts of Pittsylvania County.

They joined with forces from the north commanded by Captain William Dix and John Wilson. They started marching south. Ramsey told they were harassed by dysentery, were worn down by having to go through pestilential swamps on the long marches and were nearly famished for the lack of food.

Then, they suddenly found themselves confronted by the British Army.

## THANKS FOR THE CONTRIBUTION

"To Pittsylvania Historical Society.

"Your society is performing a wonderful service in helping to keep alive our heritage of our past years.

"Therefore, it gives me great pleasure to present to the society's general fund my check to use in the operation of the society in the coming year.

"With all good wishes for another successful year, I am

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Langhorne Jones

Chatham, VA"

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*The Pittsylvania Historical Society wishes to express deep appreciation to Mrs. Langhorne Jones for her gift of \$500 which was received on Christmas Eve. Mrs. Jones is the widow of the late Judge Jones who was an ardent supporter of this historical society. Her gift will be used to make a permanent improvement to the PHS historic building and museum.*



that was supplied with every necessity and led by Lord Cornwallis.

The American soldiers were unable to withstand the shock of battle and broke and fled from the field.

Ramsey told that a large portion of the American soldiers were rallied and finally managed to get back to Halifax County in Virginia. They crossed the Dan River and remained there until General Washington assigned General Nathaniel Green to come down and take charge of the Southern Army.

Ramsey became a sergeant under General Green and fought in the battle at Guildford, NC, and not long after that Cornwallis finally withdrew his army from the area.

Thomas Ramsey tells that he was discharged from the army March 30, 1781 at a place called Ramsey's Mills in N.C. He returned home but soon moved from Pittsylvania County over into Franklin County.

He used to love to tell of his war experiences recalling his comrades, the accidents, narrow escapes from death and starvation and especially tell how he dodged the British bullets.

Ramsey died October 24, 1844, leaving four children - Healey Ramsey, Theoderic A. Ramsey, Elizabeth Ramsey (married to Salisbury Williams, and they moved to Missouri), and Frances Ramsey (married to Joseph Epps and resided in Franklin County.)

The lengthy pension papers may be obtained from the National Archives in Washington, DC.

Mrs. Karen B. Christensen (4220 Graham Road, Jamesville, NY 13078) says if anyone is interested in learning more about Thomas F. Ramsey Jr. or his descendants, they may write to her, exclaiming "I will share what I have."

Mrs. Christensen says Thomas Ramsey is her six times removed grandfather.

\*\*\*\*\*

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**Note:** This advertisement appeared in the Pittsylvania Tribune on September 26, 1874. "Many a man seeking employment would have gotten hired if their hair hadn't been so thin or gray. But one bottle of Parker's Hair Balsam is the best investment to solve this problem.

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